NRO APPROVED FOR RELEASE
9 November 2015

CORONA Branch, Deputy for
Satellite Operations
~~(S)~~ NRO Staff
OIC: Major Francis R. Drake
Backup: Major Earl W. Burger

Duty Subjects:

The CORONA Branch is responsible to the Deputy for Satellite Operations, ~~(S)~~ NRO Staff, for the overall direction of the CORONA "J" and "M" and ARGON reconnaissance satellite programs, primarily from payload operational aspects, as applicable towards insuring that intelligence reconnaissance requirements of the USIB are met in the most expeditious and thorough manner possible within system and weather limitations.

This branch develops camera programs, orbital inclinations and other controlling parameters of reconnaissance payloads, within the capabilities of the aerospace vehicle and presents these in briefing form to the Deputy for Satellite Operations for his decisions. While CORONA/ARGON payloads are on-orbit, prepares briefings on payload options and assists the Deputy for Satellite Operations in directing the pass-by-pass payload operations. Insures that all required operational information is transmitted to system operational control elements by established deadlines.

Action Items:

For CORONA (J and M) and ARGON Projects, as applicable, takes following actions:

a. Prepares Reports Control Manuals, for approval of the Deputy for Satellite Operations.

b. Conducts general-pre-mission planning and coordination, including conduct of CPXs.

c. Schedules and activates all ground, air and orbital operations off the controlled range network (CORN).

d. Coordinates, when appropriate, to the type mission, with activities controlled by other organizations (such as peripheral reconnaissance, etc.).

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e. Maintains approved list of personnel to be notified of satellite reconnaissance operations, develops procedures for such notification, carries out notification procedures as approved by the Director, ~~(S)~~ NRO.

f. Transmits satellite launch schedule information in accordance with the approved Reports Control Manual.

g. Maintains mission following capability on a 24-hour basis monitoring the general health of the system and the remaining collection capability.

h. Monitors the progress of the intelligence take until it has been delivered to the intelligence community customers.

i. In conjunction with the Intelligence Section, conducts analyses of degree of success of CORONA Missions in regard to target coverage achieved versus target coverage attempted and collates the results. Intelligence Section is responsible for final collation.

j. Conducts post-mission critiques to improve procedures and coordination.

k. Maintains cognizance of the orbital status of all satellite reconnaissance vehicles in orbit, and records date and location of re-entry.

l. Recommends to the Deputy for Satellite Operations changes in collection capability which would be desirable with supporting analyses relating the proposed improved collection capabilities to USIB collection requirements. This will be a coordinated effort with the Intelligence Section, but prime responsibility is that of the project officer.

m. Takes necessary emergency action due to re-entry of a CORONA satellite reconnaissance vehicle in a location likely to provoke undesirable reaction or disclosure.